

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 30, 2000

Higher education board grants pre-approval to 117 programs

SHORELINE – The state Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) today granted “pre-approval” to more than 100 new programs slated to begin over the next two years.

Programs given the preliminary go-ahead today will increase access for place-bound students in underrepresented areas of the state and offer training in high-demand fields, such as information technology, engineering, education and health care.

“These programs will create new opportunity for students all over the state to continue their learning and shore up their skills,” said Bob Craves, HECB chairman and Costco senior vice president. He praised the four-year colleges and universities for making effective use of distance learning and collaborating with other public and independent schools. “These are the kinds of good ideas we need if we want to meet the explosive demand for higher education over the next decade.”

Programs receiving pre-approval today include:

- **Statewide program in computing and information technology** delivered through distance learning -- UW;
- **Bachelor of Science in nursing** at multiple sites in response to the statewide nursing shortage. Potential sites include Colville, Grays Harbor, Longview, Moses Lake, Northern Idaho, Omak, Port Angeles, Port Townsend, Pullman, Skagit Valley, and Walla Walla -- UW Bothell and WSU;
- **Master’s degree in social work** at multiple sites through a mix of on-site faculty, interactive television, print, video and Web-based teaching. Potential sites include Toppenish, Mt. Vernon, Bellingham, Everett, Vancouver, Centralia, and Aberdeen -- UW and EWU;
- **Bachelor’s degree in manufacturing engineering** for place-bound students to meet the demand in the Spokane area, offered in collaboration with Gonzaga University and the University of Idaho -- WSU;
- **Bachelor’s degree in biotechnology** at the Cheney campus in response to rapid growth in the field -- EWU;

-- more --

- **Bachelor's degree in elementary education** delivered to place-bound students in Centralia, Vancouver and Longview in response to a need for certified teachers -- WSU; and
- **Master's degree in education/master teacher** for experienced classroom teachers at sites in Lynnwood, Moses Lake, SeaTac, Steilacoom, Wenatchee, and Yakima -- CWU in collaboration with WWU, EWU, WSU, UW Seattle, Tacoma and Bothell, and ESC.

Institutions now will further develop their program proposals and submit them to the Board for final approval. HECB review of complete proposals takes about 90 days. Nearly one-third of the programs are slated to begin this year.

HECB Executive Director Marc Gaspard explained that the Board can and does act even more quickly when urgent community need is demonstrated. "Our goal is to help colleges and universities develop strong, high quality programs that respond to statewide and community needs while eliminating duplication."

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Editor's Note: The complete list of programs receiving pre-approval is available online at <http://www.hecb.wa.gov/intro.html>.